

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE BLOGGERS ROUNDTABLE WITH GENERAL JACK STULTZ, CHIEF, ARMY RESERVE, COMMANDING GENERAL, ARMY RESERVE MODERATOR: CHARLES "JACK" HOLT, CHIEF, NEW MEDIA OPERATIONS, OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS  
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MAJ. BENNER (sp): This is Major Benner.

MR. HOLT: Yes, Major.

MAJ. BENNER: How are we doing? Hey, I have the -- I'd like to introduce Lieutenant General Jack C. Stultz -- I spell S-T-U-L-T-Z -- chief of the Army Reserve, for his opening statement.

GEN. SHULTZ: Okay, I guess that means me. (Laughs.) Listen, it's a pleasure to be here today, and thanks for taking the time to talk and everything for what you're doing to -- you know, to get the word out. And communications to me is one of the most critical things we can do. We don't do a very good job of telling our story, so this gives us an opportunity to do this, so I really appreciate it. And I'm not going to spend a lot of time in an opening statement because I really want to see more -- what kind of questions you have out there for me. I will just say I'm in -- coming up on my third year in this position. I am, in a great respect, your true reserve soldier. I had some time on active duty, left active duty after about five years and went into the business world, working for Procter & Gamble, but stayed in the Army Reserve, and so off and on this force generation cycle we talk about, this five-year rotation, I've been living it because I was mobilized in 1990, '91 for Desert Storm, came back again in '97 for Bosnia with Joint Endeavor, came back again in 2002 for Operation Enduring Freedom and then rolled into Iraqi Freedom. And so I kind of have a good perspective, I think, in terms of how you go back and forth between a civilian to the military, back to civilian -- some of the challenges it presents for both employers and the soldier, as well as for the family.

The great thing I think we have is today the Army Reserve is a true success story. We have grown -- when I came here in 1986 we were at about 185,000 end strength. Today we're at 201,000. That's 16,000 end strength we've grown in less than three years. So we're doing very well in recruiting. We're leading the other services -- the active Army, the National Guard -- in our retention rates. We're at about 130-some percent of our goal for retention.

And I think the reason is, one, we truly have set the expectations. For those people that we're recruiting, for those people that are in our force, we say, you know, this is no longer the Army Reserve that I came into way back

in '79 that said, one weekend a month, two weeks in the summer; that's all we ask. This truly is an operational force, and if you join the Army Reserve today, you are going to deploy. What we owe you is predictability. What we owe you is to take care of your family. What we owe you is to help you with your employer to make sure that you can maintain a civilian job while you're serving your country. And what we ask of you is your service.

I am truly amazed as I travel around -- and I've spent the last five of seven Christmases and Thanksgiving in Iraq and Afghanistan, and I'm truly amazed at the quality of the force that we have in the Army Reserve today. Never before have I seen this high a quality. So we've got a lot of great soldiers stepping up, a lot of great individuals joining our ranks in large numbers, and they're sticking with us. And it's a volunteer force. And I always tell the active duty commanders -- those colonels and generals that are in Iraq and Afghanistan -- I say, never underestimate that young E-4 reserve soldier that's sitting there driving your Humvee for you. He's probably better educated and he's probably more wealthy than you are. He just loves serving his country.

So it's a good-news story for the Army Reserve right now. We're recruiting and retaining the right type of soldiers who understand what they're getting into and they're doing great service for their country. So with that I'll turn it over to you and see what's on your mind.

MR. HOLT: All right, sir. Thank you very much.

Chuck, you were first online. Why don't you get us started?

Q Thank you for talking with us, General. This is Chuck Simmins from America's North Shore Journal.

GEN. SHULTZ: Okay.

Q I wanted to ask -- well, yesterday we had the opportunity to talk with General Garrett from U.S. Army Africa, and he lauded the ability that he has to draw on the unique skills of troops in the reserves and in the National Guard. I've also been following, at my site, the reconstruction efforts in both Iraq and Afghanistan and I've noted the preponderance of Guard and reserve individuals involved with those.

General Garrett basically said, we don't have a lot of people that know stuff about well drilling in the regular Army; I can find those skills in the reserve. How does the reserve go about following the non-military traditional skills that its people have so that you can fit into the PRTs and the MTTs and all of those civil affairs-type duties that are so important in today's anti-terror warfare? How do you find those skills and then how do you track them, given that they're not a traditional box to check on a military form?

GEN. SHULTZ: Yeah, Chuck, you bring up a great point. I'll tell you one -- I could sit here and talk for an hour or more on some of those same experiences I've had, but when I was in Iraq at Christmastime I was talking to an engineer battalion commander from Fort Hood, Texas, and he said, when we first got to Iraq my first mission was to take down this large building, and he said I didn't have a clue how to do this. It's in a populated area, and how am I going to demolish this building that's been battle-damaged and their afraid it's going to collapse on its own, until one of your reserve sergeants walked up and said, you know, I'm a building demolition expert in my civilian job, and he took over. And we see that every day.

Your point is exactly right. We've got this value add. When you bring a reserve soldier in, you not only bring their military skill set; you bring a civilian skill set that adds value in a lot of cases. What we're challenged with is what you're talking about: How do we track those skill sets so that we know not only do we have a guy that's out here that may be an engineer, but he may be also a water plant manager back in "Hometown, America," and if we're trying to do the infrastructure of Iraq and we're trying to do some water distribution, that's the guy we want to talk to. We created a database several years ago -- some time ago, where someone would go in and enter their civilian skill sets, and we tried to maintain that database. It really hasn't worked very well. I'll be honest with you. It was too complicated, too automated in terms of -- what you see a lot of times, there's codes associated with different civilian skills, and so pick which code applies to you and everything.

Just this past week I was meeting with my commander of my Civil Affairs Command, Major General Dave Morris, and I told Dave -- I gave him the task; I said, Dave, I want you to go back and recreate a system, but in today's technical environment, we don't have to have codes and things like that. All you need to do is put in there a narrative that says, describe what your specific skills are, and if this person in their civilian life is a city manager, that's what he puts in there: I'm a city manager with 15 years of experience. If he's a neurosurgeon, he puts in there, I'm a neurosurgeon, because in today's environment with Google and the word search capabilities, you don't have to have codes in everything.

What I want is the ability to have everybody in my force put in, just in a narrative form, these are the special skills I've got. And then if I'm looking for an agricultural specialist, I can Google the word "agriculture" across the force and I might come up and one guy says, my hobby is agriculture and the other guy says, I'm a professor of agriculture, and then I'll be able to disseminate, this is the one I want, the guy that's the professor. I need his expertise.

So we're not where we want to be. We made a first cut at it a couple of years ago and didn't do as well as we'd hoped. We're going back at it again now, and what I told Dave is, get it right for the civil affairs community and then I'll expand it across the force.

Q Right. Thank you.

MR. HOLT: All right. Jim? Jim Dolbow, are you still with us?

Q General, sorry about that. I had the phone on mute. Jim Doblrow with the Naval Institute blog. The Army Reserve is making history every day. What are you doing to capture and preserve it for future generations?

GEN. SHULTZ: Not as much as we should. (Laughs.) You know, that's part of the challenge we've got is, you know, you're so focused on the day-to-day operational tempo and everything, a lot of times you fail to capture the history for posterity. But I do have a -- I've got a historical directorate in the Army Reserve. I've got an Army Reserve historian, a Ph.D. civilian that is my point man to say we've got to capture the history of the Army Reserve, all the great accomplishments and lessons learned, and mostly importantly, the people. You know, that's really the thing that I say.

And a lot of people have said, you know, you ought to write a book. I say, I don't have time to write a book. But I will go to Iraq, Afghanistan, Horn of Africa, Kosovo, and I'll come back and I say, I've got enough speeches for the rest of the year, because all I want to do is talk about the people that I met that are Army Reserve soldiers -- and not just Army Reserve, National Guard, whatever, but Reserve component soldiers serving their country that have a great story to tell, in terms of their civilian occupation and their military occupation.

And, you know, when you take a gentleman that's a sergeant first class in civil affairs, who owns a bar back in Green Bay, Wisconsin and likes to play music; and I'm with him in Kosovo, and he's taking me to the music school he started in this little town, where he's got Serbs and Albanians that can't go to school together, that can't live together, but they're in a music school together; and they're playing "Ave Maria" for me in concert -- I mean, those are the kind of stories that I say, gosh, we got to, we got to capture these for posterity because people really don't understand how much America is doing in other parts of the world to leave a little bit of America everywhere we go.

So, my challenge to my historian is, yeah, we've got to capture all those stories and maintain the record. And so we do have a historian. My fear is we probably get 10 percent of what's out there just because we don't either see it -- and the thing is that our soldiers don't sing their own praises. You find out about it and you say, why didn't you tell me about this? And the soldiers' first comment is, "I'm just doing my job, I'm not looking for any kind of notoriety." But, good point. We've got to do more to capture history.

Q Thank you, General.

MR. HOLT: Okay, David?

Q Hi, General, this is David Axe, with War is Boring. Can you hear me okay?

GEN. STULTZ: Yes, I got you, Dave.

Q Great. So, a couple years back you and I actually had an interview in the Pentagon and you highlighted equipment shortages, especially highlighted shortages of trucks. Can you update me on your equipment situation, where there are any shortages and what you're doing about those shortages?

GEN. STULTZ: Yeah. It's getting better, but it's not getting well as quickly as I would like. And I am not happy. (Laughs.) So, I'm not going to sit here and say, boy, the future looks good and I'm happy about what's going on.

I'm glad that we're getting the resourcing. I'm glad that we're getting the support of Congress, in terms of the funding. It's just that the delivery time just seems to be taking too long from the time that they say, hey, we're going to give you x-billion dollars to get your equipment right, to the point where I have trucks, or whatever else, driving into the motor pool in the units.

And so we're getting the resourcing, but the equipment is not showing up as quickly as I'd hoped. And, in fact, I had meeting with the Army G-8 people yesterday on that very subject. And I said, you know, I'm getting ready to come up for Congressional testimony again this year and I'm sure one of the

questions Congress will always ask is, hey, two years ago we appropriated x-billion dollars for the Army Reserve for equipment. How much of that have you received?

And I said, you know, the story's not that good right now. And I got it, you know -- there's other priorities out there, and a lot of times the manufacturers are, instead of manufacturing trucks for me they've got to make MRAPs for the soldiers, because that's top priority. But, we've got to do a better job, I think, in the Army, in terms of being able to better predict and track dollars given to us by Congress, and translating that into the equipment that's showing up in the motor pools of the Army Reserve or the National Guard, and the active Army.

So, it's a challenge. The positive is, we're getting the support. It's just taking longer than I'd hoped it would take to get the equipment flowing.

Q Okay, thank you.

Q General, are you talking about shortages in-theatre or here in the States?

GEN. STULTZ: No, no. This is here in the States.

You know, one of the things I always say is the units and the soldiers that we send to Iraq, Afghanistan, or wherever, are the best equipped, best trained. They have the best equipment. They have everything they need.

Where we're short of equipment is really back here in the States, and that's where we need the equipment for training, getting the next- to-deploy units ready, and the next-to-the-next-to-deploy units ready, as well as the equipment we need back here to do a lot of the homeland support missions that we have on a day to day, or on a contingency basis. That's where we're short.

And that's part of the challenge we face as we've converted from -- again, what I referred to earlier, a strategic Reserve that really was, 'Hey, we don't expect you to be ready because you're a strategic Reserve, and if we ever have to use you, you'll have plenty of time to get ready; we'll have plenty of time to get you the equipment and get you trained.' And if we commit the Reserve, you know, it's really after we've been at this war for a long time.

That's not the way we're used now. We're an operational Reserve. We're expected that, when we're called, we're trained and we're ready and we can move out. Well, if we're going to be that type of force, we've got to have the equipment to train on and we got to make sure we're ready.

And so we're trying to catch up from a legacy system that -- part of the old peace dividend. You know, as we took the active Army from 780,000 down to 480,000 after Desert Storm, we did the same thing with the Guard and Reserve, in terms of cutting structure. But, we also took a lot of risk, in terms of equipment, because we said, you know, we don't think we're going to need to use this type of force on an enduring basis any time in the future. Well, as we were in World War II, as we were in World War I, and others, we don't do a real good job of predicting the future. And so now we find ourselves where we are, and we're playing catch-up.

MR. HOLT: All right.

Jason?

Q Sir, this is Jason Sigger, with the Armchair Generalist.

I was trying to estimate how much -- how many Reservists are over in Iraq and Afghanistan now. And I thought it was between -- what, 19 and 20,000? And I was wondering if you might comment upon -- the administration has talked about increasing the number of people in Afghanistan, do you foresee, with the draw down in Iraq and the escalation in Afghanistan, do you think it's going to be about the same number of people deployed overseas from the Reserves, or do you see an increase or a decrease?

GEN. STULTZ: Yeah. And this is just my best guess, this is not based on any fact or guidance I've gotten, but you're about right in the numbers. We keep somewhere between 25 (thousand) to 30,000 Army Reserve soldiers mobilized on active duty on a pretty much persistent basis. And that's been true for about the last three to four years. About 20,000 of those are deployed overseas in Iraq, Afghanistan, and some in the Horn of Africa, and about, you know, anywhere from 5 (thousand) to 7,000 of those are mobilized back here in the United States. I keep a lot of soldiers mobilized back here that are manning the hospitals on the military bases -- doctors and nurses. I keep a lot of soldiers mobilized back here that are doing the training-base mission, running basic training -- the drill sergeants that are at Fort Jackson, Fort Benning, Fort Knox, and places like that. I keep a lot of soldiers mobilized back here that are running the garrison operations at our installations, at places like Fort Campbell, Fort Hood and Fort Carson.

And so that 30,000 -- 25 or 30,000 number has pretty much stayed constant, and about the 20,000 figure you quoted, deployed forward, is pretty constant. And I've told my commanders and my force I expect that to be, for the long-term, pretty much steady state.

Now, when it gets to looking at the administration and what are they going to do with Iraq, and what are they going to do with Afghanistan, and what's going to be the impact on us, I don't think it's going to increase the number of soldiers we have forward deployed substantially. At the same time, if they have a draw down in Iraq I don't think it's going to decrease the amount of soldiers we've got forward deployed substantially.

With the Army Reserve, our forces are combat support, combat service support. So, we have the engineers, the medical, the military policemen, the transportation and logistics, the civil affairs force, those type of enablers that enable the brigade combat teams to do their mission. And that's kind of that support structure that's out there that stays pretty steady state. Even as they surge brigade combat teams, or they decrease the number of brigade combat teams, that infrastructure that's there supporting that operation pretty well stays steady.

So, even if they increase the footprint in Afghanistan, as they are indicating, yeah, we'll probably have an increased footprint in Afghanistan but it's not going to be in the terms of numbers, or the percentages as you're going to see the brigade or the combat forces that are increasing over there. We're going to be more providing the engineers, the transportation, some of the C-18s, and a lot of which are already over there supporting the NATO forces that are there currently. So if the brigade combat teams from the U.S. replace some of those NATO forces, our infrastructure is already there and in place. So I think

that 20 (thousand) to 25,000 number probably is going to stay current, and I think that back here in the States that somewhere between 5 (thousand) and 8,000 is probably going to stay pretty constant. So we'll be in that 25 (thousand) to 30,000 range for the enduring future.

Q Thank you, sir.

MR. HOLT: All right. Andrew?

Q General, good afternoon. Andrew Lubin from the Military Observer. General, every time we pick up the newspapers and watch the news we see more unemployment figures. What is happening with your soldiers who are coming off Reserve duty? Are they able to get their jobs back or how is -- what -- are you able to turn around and proactively help their employers with -- keep the jobs?

GEN. STULTZ: Yeah, it's a good question, Andrew, and it's one of the areas I'm -- I'm pretty excited about to, be honest with you. You know, I got a question several months ago from -- I forget which media report it was -- but they said, we understand that in the Reserve component soldiers that are coming back have a -- are having problems with jobs. And I said, well, here's what I -- here's what I see from my perspective.

One, some of the soldiers that I have coming back joined the Army Reserve coming right out of high school, went to Basic and AIT -- their advanced training -- came back to their unit and deployed. And so now they're coming back home and they're really looking for their first job; I mean, they may have had a job during high school but they really hadn't settled into a career. So that -- that's not a factor of them deploying not having a job. It's a factor -- they just are getting started in their careers.

The other area that I see is soldiers that are coming back that said, you know, when I left I was flipping burgers. I'm better than that. I've been given responsibility. I've been giving -- given the authority to make decisions. I've been able to leave -- lead. I've proven myself. I want to do better. And that's -- that's exciting. Well, about a year-and-a-half ago to your point I said, you know, we really need to sit down with the employers and have a conversation because I need to make sure that my soldiers that I'm asking to go serve their country can have a career -- a civilian career -- because I'm not going to pay the mortgage -- I'm not going to pay the kids' education on one weekend a month's drill pay that they'll get when they're not mobilized and deployed.

And so I started some forums meeting with employers around America -- Chambers of Commerce meetings, business forums -- to talk those issues. What I found is one, employers of America are supporting us. They -- they really do want to support and -- and say, we understand winning the war on terror is important for this country. They ask us to give them some predictability; if you're going to take one of my soldiers and put him in uniform give me as much predictable time to react as you can. Don't do it on the spur of the moment. And we're getting much better at that.

Normally, now we're getting about 10 months' to 12 months' notice to the soldiers before they're asked to mobilize, and employers are feeling good about that. But the thing that excites me the most, as I started talking with these employers and talked about the challenges we have in terms of finding the quality individual we want in our ranks, and what we put them through to screen

them to make sure they're drug free, physically fit, morally fit, aptitude-wise that they have the aptitude to do what we're asking them, they started getting excited and they said, you know, we have the same challenge. How can we tap into your talent?

And so we created a employer partnership initiative where I said, rather than me coming out and asking you to give up your employees to be soldiers why don't you let me go recruit for you because we share the same skill sets? And then one of the first organizations we talked with was the American Truckers Association (sic).

Bill Graves is the former governor of Kansas and he is the head of the American Truckers Association, and he said, our long-haul truckers in America are average age 50 years old or older. It's an aging workforce that we've got to replenish. And I said, Bill, what's the biggest challenge you have in finding truck drivers? And he said, finding one that can pass a drug test. And I said, you know, I'm recruiting truck drivers and I'm training truck drivers and I'm putting them into Iraq and Afghanistan to prove their capability. Why don't you let me bring them to you?

And so we set up partnerships with Schneider Trucking, JB Hunt, Conway Freight where we are now recruiting soldiers either in our existing ranks, soldiers that are leaving active service and wanting to go into a civilian career, or young people out in the community who are thinking about joining the Army Reserve and are also looking for a career opportunity to be truck drivers for those companies.

Conway just recently came down to one of my units and hired six of my soldiers on the spot to fill their needs. And Conway feels very good about what's going on there because they said, we -- these are vacancies that we've had that we couldn't fill. My soldiers feel good because they said, I've got a job with a company that supports me in my Reserve career.

We next tapped into the medical community -- medical technologists, nursing, those types of things -- where the hospitals are saying, we can't find x-ray techs, radiology, respiratory, whatever. We are now -- we have agreements with Inova Health Care here in Northern Virginia, Cleveland Clinic in Ohio, Pennsylvania Medical Center where we're able to recruit soldiers or potential soldiers. Say, a kid coming out of high school who wants to get into medicine, I can offer him a job in the Army Reserve. I can also offer him a job at Inova Health Care right here in Northern Virginia. In fact, I've got three soldiers at Fort Sam Houston right now finishing up their initial training that already have jobs when they get home here in Virginia.

I've got 150 employers already signed up. I've got 200 waiting. We just signed last week with General Electric -- 300,000 employees. November, we were in Bentonville, Arkansas, and signed with Wal-Mart. They said, we've got stores in every community of America and we love your soldiers. What employers are telling us is when they hire a Reserve soldier, they don't just get an employee, they get somebody that has a great work ethic, that has integrity, that has loyalty, that has dedication, and the productivity goes up. So it's a win-win situation for both of us now. So I'm feeling real good. Even in the current economic situation we still have a lot of employers out there that are calling us every day saying, I've got another opening. Can you fill it for me?

Q Guys, if I could follow up. General, look at yesterday. You had -- Caterpillar announced 20,000, Hope Depot 7,000. So when your -- when your



soldiers come back their jobs, if not the exact job, they are getting picked up again?

GEN. STULTZ: Yes. Yeah, exactly. We started a -- I've got a director up here in D.C. right now. I've got a whole section I've filled up with some full time people that are doing our employer initiative partnership for me. We've got a website that we've established so the soldiers can go online and look and see ahead of time where there are opportunities out there as well as the employers we're going to get -- where they can go and find our soldiers that are out there that have the qualifications. You know, the question that was up earlier about the civilian skill set, that's part of that. I want them to be able to -- to where the soldier can post online his skills and abilities so if a Cox Cable Systems (sic) says, you know, we need some people that are familiar with fiber optics, they can go onto my website and say, here are a bunch of soldiers that have fiber optics training, and oh, by the way, here's one that happens to live in Little Rock, Arkansas, and that's where we're desperate to have somebody now. And they can call the soldier and say, hey, are you interested in a job right here in Little Rock? That's where we're trying to get to but right now we're having great success with soldiers coming home if they want to change jobs we're able to facilitate that.

Q Okay. Excellent. Thank you.

MR. HOLT: All right. Anybody else online? Anybody I missed? Sir, I did have one question that was e-mailed to me. I'd like to pose this one for you.

GEN. STULTZ: Okay.

MR. HOLT: This came from Jonas Hogg (ph) who is the -- out of the St. Petersburg/Tampa Bay area. And he's got a -- he says, how has the increase in the op tempo of training and deployments for the Reserve units changed the culture of the Army Reserves? You know, what's the defining feature of the Reserves versus active duty today?

GEN. STULTZ: I think the -- in one -- one respect the culture of the Reserve -- in fact, I -- when I travel around I have town hall meetings with my soldiers. I tell them, take the term 'Reserve' out of your lexicon. You -- there really isn't a Army Reserve per se in terms of the way we used to think about it. You're all part of the Army. It just so happens that today when I'm in Iraq with a soldier, those soldiers on active duty this time next year they may be in Reserve status, and then three or four years later they're back in active status.

And so it really is one army where you're just changing the status of I'm on active duty for a while, I'm in Reserve status for a while, I'll go back to active status for a while -- (audio break) -- the old traditional, you know, when you'd said -- a soldier says they're -- they're going to leave active duty the question was, are you getting out or staying in. And if you were getting out it was kind of like you're getting out of the military but you may go into the Reserve but that's a whole different organization out there.

Today's environment is hey, no, it's the Army and it's not a matter of getting out or you're going to change your status from an active status to a Reserve status with the expectation that, you know, three years later you may decide to go back to active status on a permanent basis or you may get called back to active status for a year. So I think that culture is out there and what

I'm finding is more and more as we've got these units that have deployed for once, twice, or whatever, the recognition across the force, just like General Garrett said in (SEATAC ?) this is a high-quality, highly experienced force out there in the Reserve. You know, when I was in Iraq just recently and I was talking with Jeff Hammond. He's Fourth Infantry Division commander. I've got a engineer brigade over there. Jeff Talley is the brigade commander, a one-star. And -- and General Hammond said, you know, Jeff is probably my best brigade commander. He said, it is unbelievable what he has done with that engineer brigade in Sadr City and rebuilding that city but not just rebuilding the city. He's got a campaign plan that says we're going deny terrain to the enemy by building.

So as you secure an area with Fourth Infantry Divisions brigade combat teams then I'm going to come in behind you and I'm going to enlist the locals and we're going to rebuild the infrastructure and they're going to take ownership for it, and when they take ownership they're going to deny the terrorists, the al Qaeda or whatever, from coming back into that area. And it's working a block at a time.

And I told Jeff Hammond -- I said, what would you expect? Jeff Talley is a professor of engineering at Notre Dame. He's a pretty experienced guy and pretty knowledgeable guy, you know. That's what you get with the Army Reserve. But Jeff Talley will tell you, I'm a professor of engineering at Notre Dame but I'm a soldier first. That's my love. I'll go back to Notre Dame and teach engineering and enjoy doing what I'm doing but I love being a soldier first. That's a different culture from one weekend a month, two weeks in the summer.

MR. HOLT: It is. And do we have any follow-up questions?

Q Yeah, I have one.

MR. HOLT: Okay.

Q This is Chuck again.

GEN. STULTZ: Yeah, Chuck.

Q Here in Rochester, New York -- upstate New York -- like in many area -- municipalities, money is tight, and one of the areas where it's tight is in law enforcement. What we see reported in the paper is that the overtime for sheriff's deputies, for city police is up, and one of the reasons always cited is the 10 or 20 or 30 individuals that have been called up, either to the Guard or to the Reserve, and leaving holes in the local manning pool for the law enforcement.

Can you speak to the sacrifices that are being made by municipalities and by the employers in general when they're losing really significant parts of their workforce for deployments?

GEN. STULTZ: Yeah. That is a great point, and it is a -- in my opinion, this employer partnership initiative that we've started with the Reserve, one of the next phases as we move forward with this, and I've started talking to people about this, is if we're going to partner with employers and if employers are going to partner with us -- and they really are.

We're developing -- it's a human capital strategy for this nation. Because what we're saying is hey, listen, we're going to partner together with

these companies to develop a set of skills or capabilities that we can share, both in the civilian and the local, state, and national government level, and we can share in uniform when we need them.

And if I've got a hospital out there where, let's say, this radiology technologist, or if I've got a trucking company with this truck driver, and we're both together developing this individual, giving him a career, and we're sharing their abilities --

When they're not on active duty, they're working for their local community or that company back there, when they're called to active duty, they quickly put on a uniform and come and do the same skill set for me, we've created a real plethora of skills sets for America.

We've got to share, also, the cost. And we've got to recognize that these companies that are partnering with us are making a sacrifice by their willingness to give up this employee when needed to us, and we can use them in uniform.

And so one of the things that I've got on my agenda is let's look at health care costs. And that company or that police force back there is providing a -- health care coverage for that employee and their family, and then when we call them to active duty, we switch them over to a military health care plan and, in a lot of cases, ask them to change doctors and nurses or whatever. And then when they come back, they've got to switch back to the old doctor or whatever, they've got to see if each plan has a doctor in their local --

I said, God, this is crazy. That's a strategic model. If we're an operational force, we ought to have one health care plan for that employee, and we ought to share the cost together. The government and their employer together, because we're going to share the employee. We need to recognize that when that employer has to give up that employee, they've got to back-fill them. That's a cost. So we need to figure out a way of somehow helping to share that cost.

One idea we've got -- and I've got a person actually working this for me -- it's in the infant's, conceptual stages, so don't go out and tell everybody this is going to happen. But I said, you know, there may be a lot of retired military people out there in America who still -- I see them all the time when I go to the American Legion or VFW conventions and the guys say, I'd still like to serve, but I'm just too old, or whatever.

That might be a temporary labor force that we could reach out and touch, in some cases, that would take the place of some of our soldiers. Can't do it in all cases, because I'm not going to take a young guy from a VFW hut and say, can you take the place of this neurosurgeon I'm going to use from this hospital?

But there may be opportunities out there where a guy's working in a warehouse or working somewhere else, where we've got an individual that we say, hey, listen. You're retired, so you've got health care. So you've got a pension already, or whatever. So you're pretty cheap labor.

But really, what I'm asking you for is to serve your country again by taking the place of one of my soldiers that I'm going to have to use.

So I've got somebody looking at that and say what's the feasibility of that? It may not be feasible, and they may come back say, yeah, good idea, but it won't work.

I've also started looking and saying maybe I've got soldiers -- I have a lot of soldiers who come back -- this is what I mentioned earlier -- that really don't have a job or don't have a plan when they come back, because they're thinking about changing careers.

Maybe that's a case where if I've got a truck driver, this guy who's been driving a truck for me, he might be willing to go fill in for the guy that I'm calling up from Snyder, and say, hey, I can drive a truck, so let me go take his place. And Snyder may say, hey, we really like this guy and we want to keep him on.

But I think there's -- we've got to do something to recognize that when we do pull a workforce out, just as you indicated, with the local police, that puts a burden on the local community, one, to find some kind of temporary back-fill or to pay overtime.

And we've got to figure out a way to help offset that cost, either with some kind of temp labor force, if we can provide that, or some kind of incentive or compensation.

Other countries have a model. I was in London this past summer, and they have a model where they actually compensate an employer when they call one of their reservists up from that employer. So it's not a foreign idea throughout the world.

But good point. I think you're right on.

Q Thank you.

MR. HOLT: All right. Anyone else? All right. Sir, we're just about out of time, but General Stultz, if you've got any final closing thoughts for us, the floor is yours again.

GEN. STULTZ: No, I just -- I guess, in closing, once again, I appreciate what you're doing, really helping get the word out. because as I said earlier, we don't do a good job telling our story and really getting America to understand and recognize what a treasure they have with these soldiers who every day put their lives on hold, their education, their civilian jobs, their family, to go and risk their lives to serve their country. And they're proud of what they're doing.

When I was in Iraq a few weeks ago, I'm talking to a military police unit that is getting ready to go up to Tikrit, Camp Speicher, a young E-4 there by the name of Specialist Dunbar. And I said, what do you do back home, Dunbar? And he said, well, back in Maryland I'm finishing my education.

And I said, great, what are you majoring in? And he said, I'm finishing my doctorate in physics. You know? God, can you imagine? Here's a kid who's finishing up his Ph.D. and he's in the Army Reserve as an E-4. (I want ?) to make him an officer, but he's in the Army Reserve as an E-4 serving his country.

He doesn't have to be there. It's a volunteer service now, but he's willing to do that. And I'm not saying everybody out there has got a Ph.D., but you just run across that time and time again where you have these highly qualified, highly educated, tremendous potential, but they just want to serve their country.

And the Army Reserve lets them do that, because they can put their life on hold, go do their service, and then come back and pick up.

What we owe to them is, one, our appreciation and admiration. But we also got to make it where they can come back and pick up where they left off and keep producing.

And that's what I'm all about is if we're going to sustain a war on terror for a long time, and we're going to sustain the Army Reserve as an operational force, we've got to make it almost transparent, where an individual can stop their civilian job, serve their country, and go right back to what they're doing.

And we capitalize on their civilian skills when we put them in uniform, and we capitalize on their military experience when we put them back in civilian life.

I think we're getting there. I'm feeling real good about the direction we're headed in.

So thanks for your time. I really do appreciate what you're doing.  
MR. HOLT: All right.

GEN. STULTZ: Thank you for the time.

MR. HOLT: Thank you, sir, and we look forward to speaking to you again, hopefully.

GEN. STULTZ: Oh, yeah. Any time. I'd be proud to do it.

MR. HOLT: All right. Thank you, sir.

GEN. STULTZ: Thanks.

Q Thank you, sir.

END.